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SUBJECT: 98TH IOM COUNCIL - GENERAL DEBATE AND RESOLUTIONS

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[1](#)B. GENEVA 1021

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: IOM Director General William Swing presided over the organization's Ninety-Eighth Council meeting November 23-26, which focused on a number of institutional issues, including budget and structural reform initiatives. Member States agreed to a 1.5 percent increase in IOM's 2010 Administrative Budget to 39,388,000 Swiss francs (approx USD 38.6 million); adopted the 2010 Operational Budget of USD 650.6 million; and agreed to resume consultations on budget reform. After much debate and extended informal consultations Member States adopted a resolution authorizing IOM's administration to begin implementing the recommendations of the Director General's ad-hoc structure review team (SRT). The Council agenda also included two sessions of the International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) on the thematic issues of Human Rights and Migration and Global and Regional Migration Dialogues, as well as an Administration presentation on IOM's approach to irregular migration and mixed flows. Member States elected the Executive Committee for 2010-2011; and appointed the Comptroller and Auditor General of India as external auditor for the period of 2010-2012. End Summary.

Election of Officers

[1](#)2. (U) The Council elected by acclamation the following officers who will serve as the Bureau for all IOM governing body meetings until the IOM Council in December 2010:

-- Chairman: Ambassador (Mr.) Shinichi KITAJIMA, Japan;
-- First Vice-Chair: Ambassador (Mr.) Idriss JAZAIRY, Algeria;

-- Second Vice-Chair: Ambassador (Mr.) Christian STROHAL, Austria;
-- Rapporteur: (Ms.) Adriana MENDOZA, Colombia.

New Observer

[1](#)3. (U) The Council approved the application of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) to be an IOM Observer.

Director General Statement

[1](#)4. (U) Director General (DG) William Swing in his annual report to the Council highlighted the wide range of programmatic activities IOM undertakes around the globe, provided an overview of the organization's accomplishments in 2009, and noted areas the organization will continue to work on in 2010. He emphasized, as he does in almost all

presentations to member states, his ongoing commitment to "member state ownership of the organization," including regular and close consultation on all aspects on institutional governance, enhancing partnerships with UN agencies, and improving staff development. He noted 2009 was the 25th anniversary of initiation of an earlier internal reform process that included a move to the current Headquarters building, a new leadership structure, and a review of IOM's Constitution, changes that helped to prepare IOM for a period of exponential growth and a broadening and deepening of its activities around the world. Looking ahead, Swing observed that, in addition to the current structural and budget reform initiatives, the organization needed to enhance oversight and monitoring; improve gender equity within the organization; reevaluate the viability and sustainability of some IOM country offices; and improve internal communication.

Member Statements

¶5. (U) Member States, while broadly supportive of the current strategic direction of the organization, addressed a number of common themes in the general debate. These include: broad support for the proposed structural reform; support for the human rights of migrants; the need to review IOM's budget structure; the impact of the current global economic crisis on migration flows; and the importance of continued close partnership between IOM and UNHCR, and between IOM and the regional consultative processes on migration. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the European Union, noted EU support for the structural review team recommendations, but urged IOM to also focus on effective oversight mechanisms and to ensure IOM capacity in the Mediterranean corresponds to the unique needs in the region. Sweden also briefed IOM members on several regional developments as the EU moves to create a coherent, common migration policy among all 27 members. Ecuador, speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC), thanked IOM for existing programs in the region, but noted their concern that few new IOM activities were initiated in 2009. Ecuador also expressed the GRULAC position that states must reduce the development gap to address the root causes of migration and the impact of environmental changes and natural disasters. Sudan, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, touched on the importance of the linkages of migration and development, hinting that they would like to see more of a focus on this issue in the upcoming discussion of IOM Strategy. The Africa group agreed with the objectives of the SRT report, but requested more time to study its specific recommendations. Sudan also regretted the insufficient IOM resources dedicated to Africa projects given the serious and complex migration challenges the continent faces.

¶6. (U) PRM Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary Margaret Pollack heading the U.S. delegation, welcomed new IOM Deputy Director General (DDG) Laura Thompson, expressed appreciation for the work of IOM administration and staff as they simultaneously tackle budget and structural reforms, and the administration's willingness to strengthen IOM's personnel structures. She urged the Administration to continue to consult with Member States as it pursues these reforms.

IOM Governance and Resolutions

¶7. (U) IOM Structural Review: IOM circulated a draft resolution on the structure review based upon Member State feedback during the Standing Committee on Programs and Finance (Ref B). Most member states strongly supported the resolution, which would authorize the IOM administration to proceed with the structural adjustments in consultation with member states and within the limits of available resources. The Africa group initially objected to the resolution over concerns regarding the number and placement of regional

offices. However, after extensive informal consultations led by DDG Thompson the group agreed to a revised text that endorsed the SRT report but dropped specific reference to the eventual number of regional offices once the reform process is complete. The Council passed the revised resolution by consensus. IOM staff later noted that, surprisingly, the language of final resolution was stronger than the initial draft.

¶8. (U) Program and Budget for 2010: The Council adopted the 2010 Program and Budget providing for a 1.5 percent increase in the Administrative Budget to 39,388,000 Swiss francs (approx. USD 38.6 million). (Note: The USG 2010 assessment will be 9,247,251 Swiss francs, or approx. USD 9.1 million). The Program and Budget resolution also includes a provision calling on the DG and Member States to resume consultations on budget reform "with a view to finding solutions to address funding of the core structure."

¶9. (SBU) A group of countries led by Canada and supported by Japan, France, Germany and the UK, initially lobbied for zero nominal growth (ZNG) in the 2010 budget. (Note: The USG supported IOM's Scenario I proposal for a 2.55 percent increase.). Wishing to avoid the last minute negotiations which dominated 1st year's Council session, Member States compromised on the 1.5 percent proposal early in the week. Although the IOM administration did not receive the full 2.55 percent requested, they were pleased that Member States agreed to reengage on broader budget reform, and that member states were willing to move away from a strict ZNG position.

¶10. U) Reports: The Council adopted resolutions accepting the Reports on the Ninety-sixth Council the Ninety-seventh (Special) Session of the Council, and the Hundred and Sixth Session of the Executive Committee.

¶11. (U) Appointment of an External Auditor for the period 2010-2012: At the proposal of the Council Chair and with the agreement of the five candidates, Member States held an initial straw poll to gauge support for each candidate. Following the straw poll, member states held a second secret ballot among the two remaining candidates, Ghana and India. In the formal vote, India received 59 votes to Ghana's 43 votes. Three Member States abstained. Ghana graciously expressed their appreciation to all Member States and pledged

their full support to India in this position.

¶12. (U) Arrears: IOM Administration reported that nine states had made payments since the November Standing Committee on Programs and Finance: Argentina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Croatia, Iran, Libya, Namibia, Paraguay, and the Republic of Korea. Twelve Member States are adhering to their repayment plans, leaving only eleven member states still subject to Article 4 of IOM's Constitution, meaning having outstanding arrearages for more than two years. Approximately USD 7.6 million in assessed contributions remain unpaid. DG Swing noted his efforts to work closely with countries in arrears to try to help them come current in their payments, and urged those Member States who haven't negotiated a repayment plan to do so.

¶13. (U) Members states elected the 2010-2011 Executive Committee by acclamation. The new committee will have thirty-three members, a reduction of two members from 2008-2009. The new ExCom members are Angola, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Congo, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, and the United States.

¶14. (U) Irregular Migration and Mixed Flows: IOM provided an overview of its strategy which focuses on both short and long-term needs of migrants. IOM noted that all efforts are based on the human rights of migrants, and that their

activities can include direct assistance to migrants; helping states to develop policy and legislation; training officials; dissemination information; and coordinating partnerships between states. Member States generally supported the IOM strategy and thanked IOM for its work.

International Dialogue on Migration

¶15. (U) Human Rights of Migrants: The human rights of migrants were a recurring theme throughout the Council and the main topic of a keynote video address by Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Many Member States also raised this issue in their statements during the general debate and it was touched upon in IOM's presentation on irregular migration and mixed migratory flows. It was also the theme of the first International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) plenary discussion. Interventions ranged from those encouraging Member States to respect the human rights of migrants to interventions that sought a more expansive definition of human rights, either by including economic and social rights or by referring to a 'universal' principle of non-discrimination. USDEL noted that this was not a term we have heard used before. Kyung-wa Kang from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights supported the universality of this principle, but could not cite any agreement which clearly establishes it as an accepted principle.

¶16. (U) Highlights of Global and Regional Migration Dialogues: In the second IDM plenary session, the Greek Permanent Representative briefed IOM members on the recent 4th Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) held in Athens November 4-5. He reported the Forum had been successful in laying out concrete steps member states can take to promote better coherence between migration and development policies and how migration can contribute to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Mexico's Undersecretary for Population, Migration, and Religious Affairs described his government's plans for the fifth GFMD scheduled for November 2010. Mexico is considering possible themes for its GFMD chairmanship that would emphasize "shared responsibility" of destination and origin countries in dealing with the challenges of migration and the need to protect the human rights of migrants regardless of documentary status. He described the steps Mexico is taking to incorporate human rights concerns into its own migration policies, including mainstreaming the principle of non-discrimination into its migration policies and procedures and establishing protections for unaccompanied minors. Thailand's Permanent Representative and South Africa's Deputy Minister of Home Affairs described their governments' individual experiences heading regional migration dialogues in their respective regions. They emphasized the fact that discussing sensitive subjects of migration in smaller group settings such as RCPs often leads to more effective cooperation among regional actors. Finally, Sweden's State Secretary for Migration and Asylum Policy described her government's leadership under the rubric of its current EU Presidency to advance common EU-wide policies and standards on migration and asylum policies and common approaches to counter-trafficking. These policies are part of a five-year Freedom, Security, and Justice work plan known as the Stockholm Program that was adopted at the December 10-11 EU summit.

Global Migration Group

¶17. (U) Global Migration Group: Director General William Swing, UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres, UN Under-Secretary General for UN-DESA, and UNITAR Executive Director Carlos Lopes participated in a panel discussing the accomplishments of the Global Migration Group over the past year. The GMG has established an annual work-plan to ensure continuity between chairs, met on a more regular basis, and participated in the Global Forum on Migration and Development

to increase its visibility.

2010 Meetings of IOM Governing Bodies

¶18. (U) The Council approved the following schedule of meetings for 2010:

- 6th Standing Committee on Programs and Finance (SCPF): May 10-11;
 - 107th Executive Committee: June 28;
 - 7th SCPF: November 2-3;
 - 99th (Special) Council Meeting: June 28
 - 100th Council Meeting: November 29-December 2.
- GRIFFITHS